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MY TWO SISTERS
A SKETCH FROM
MEMORY
BY
EMILY JUDSON

MY TWO SISTERS:

A

SKETCH FROM MEMORY.

BY

EMILY JUDSON.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.
M DCCC LIV.

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7771

STEREOTYPED AT THE
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TO

THE DEAREST MOTHER IN THE WORLD,

THIS SMALL MEMORIAL OF LOVED AND SAINTED ONES,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY HER DAUGHTER

EMILY.

NOTE.

If this little volume should be thought to require farther apology than the explanation given in the Introductory Chapter, the writer hopes to find it in the hearts of mourners. It may have been the lot of others, too, to stand by a grave fast sinking to the common earth level, and feel gratitude, as well as love, calling for a fresh sod to keep the fading memory green a little longer.

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PART II. — HARRIET.

PART I.

LAVINIA.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

It was on a clear, fresh morning in June, that, gathering the reins from the back of "Simple Susy," as a certain dumb friend of ours has been named by "the younger ones," we set off in the direction of Eaton — a village some four miles distant. How many years had passed since I had travelled that road before! and what changes had taken place! I turned from the merry little voices shouting their reiterated "Good by, mamma — good by," to the pale, thin face and drooping figure at my side, with a kind of dreamy mixture of sadness and pleasure difficult to describe. June — this

flush, luxuriant month of June — has been one of my eventful eras; but as some painful retrospections crossed my mind, I recollected the words of a meek widow, uttered while standing by the coffin of her dead daughter, "The Lord has dealt very gently with me," and I believe there was more of gratitude in my heart than of repining.

Turning from the plank road, we rattled along cheerily over an uneven but most charming way, our spirits rising with every brush of the fresh air against our cheeks, and our greatest invalid declaring that she could drive ten miles without fatigue — that she had not felt so strong for months.

"Not tired yet, mother?"

"No, dear, no; I never saw a more delightful day."

And it was delicious. The air was

rich with the fragrance of clover blossoms, and all along the way the snowy daisies and glossy golden buttercups waved, and nodded, and quivered on their tall stems, precisely as they had done in years gone by. Every now and then we entered a little wooded nook, where a stream, a foot wide, purled across the road under a plank, and then made the most of itself by trailing its liquid silver over a breadth of several feet, though of scarcely a thimble's depth. Simple Susy did her duty bravely, though, truth to tell, our party, consisting of a pair of invalids, and a third willow twig of a figure scarcely weightier, laid no heavy contribution on her strength. However, we chose to praise her, for she too, like the rest of us, had "seen better days;" and so we jogged on till we reached one of the loveliest of those many lovely blossoms of villages,

which, in spite of modern improvements, are still left to "blush unseen."

"Log City has improved wonderfully, mother."

"Don't say Log City, dear; nobody calls it that now."

"But somehow it sounds very sweet to my ear."

"It's a libel, though," muttered Kate.

And she was right, for a prettier array of tasteful cottages, mingled with more aspiring mansions, one does not often see.

We passed the village church, the first which my childish feet had ever entered, *improved* of course, like every thing else, almost beyond recognition. O, how the dear old memories came rushing, tumbling up through heart and brain, as though bent on suffocating me; till my mother chimed in with one of those pretty remi-

niscences of which mothers always have a full supply; and Susy, from sympathy either with her voice or my nervous fingers, stopped short. A little chirruping, however, sent her on again, and we soon passed the meadow and reached the deep, cool stream, in which my parents, and afterward my sister Lavinia, sealed publicly the vow that they had vowed in their hearts unto the Lord. The whole way was familiar, and yet strange; for changes will come on hills and streams, as well as on forms and faces.

"I had forgotten, mother, the hill was so steep," I said, as, with rather an ostentatious display of the difficulties of her task, Simple Susy toiled up the little ascent.

"That is odd."

"How so, mother?"

"Do you recollect the first time you went away from home, laying away the Morrisville hill in your memory as a mountain, and the brook as a river, and how disappointed you were when you came back again?"

"I was younger then, mother; my imagination has been levelled, and so you see the hills go up again."

Why did my mother sigh? I meant to ask her, but the feat of turning a very sharp corner where men were at work on the road kept my hands busy and my tongue silent for a moment, and then we came full upon the graveyard, whose iron railings we had first seen from the bridge below. Fully conscious of the dignity of my position as driver, I put forward my head to scan the workmen; but I had no need to ask the favor of assistance, for, with friendly alacrity, one of

them came forward and anticipated my wishes. He threw open the pretty gate, and we drove on slowly and silently over the smooth gravel.

"It is very beautiful, mother."

"Very."

"I almost think that I should like ——"

"Yes, dear; it is very beautiful.'

And so it was; though that was not what I was about to say, and my mother knew it. A coverlet of molten gold, broken here and there by small shadows, seemed spread before us, with fresh green mounds and white monuments looking through; and here again the lithe-stemmed daisies and buttercups, and the rich-smelling clover, even as by the wayside, hung quivering at every touch of bland summer air with a little joyous quiver, which seemed almost out of place in a graveyard. At the foot of the hill we had just

ascended, and along the margin of the brook, the field lilies stood in regal groups, and the meadow queen, and blue, blossoming sedges shook their gem-like heads, and laughed, and nodded, and seemed to whisper joyous things to each other, just as in the days long, long agone.

"Here!" said Kate, suddenly.

Simple Susy must have been good at keeping the road with her one eye, for I had not thought of her since we passed the gate.

"Here! Why, I recollect it as close down by the fence."

"Yes, but see how much larger the enclosure is — it is almost central now. Isn't it a pretty spot?"

I liked the old spot better, but forbore to say so; while slowly, as became such "weakly ones," we climbed down the steps of the old buggy to the ground. It was

a very simple headstone we had stopped beside — a common marble, with no carving, and only the inscription, —

IN MEMORY OF

LAVINIA R. CHUBBUCK,

WHO DIED JUNE, 1829,

IN THE TWENTY-THIRD YEAR OF HER AGE.

"THEM WHO SLEEP IN JESUS WILL THE LORD BRING WITH HIM."

"How very strange," I could not help remarking, as I leaned over the sleeping ashes of her who had been named by common consent "the flower of the family," "that every memorial of one so lovely should have perished."

"Emily!"

"What, mother?"

The "what" was not distinctly told me; and I do not know precisely how certain touching allusions, chiming in with feelings and half-formed conceptions that

had long haunted my own heart, of justice to the memory of the lost and loved, shaped themselves round to my understanding; but I recollect, just one year ago this bright, pure morning, leaning over my sister's grave, and saying, "I will try, mother."

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD.

My sister Lavinia, the oldest of a family of seven children, was born in Goffstown, N. H., September 28, 1806. Though mild and amiable in disposition, she early gave evidence of a strong will, and a degree of quiet self-reliance not usual in one endowed with so many feminine graces. She was of a reflective cast of mind, fond of books, but fonder still of doing something to make her little hands useful, or saying something to encourage and cheer the desponding. From the earliest childhood she combined, with a manner gentle and winning, a singular degree of courage and hopefulness, being

always strengthened rather than depressed by difficulties. Her nature, indeed, seemed moulded to bear responsibilities, and it early assumed its proper burden. The sun of worldly prosperity shone with some brightness on Lavinia's cradle; but a series of business misadventures, an insolvency which involved more than the insolvent, and finally a fire, changed her destiny very materially. She was now a poor man's child; but that was not the worst; for poverty, with strength to struggle against it, is oftenest a blessing. But with poverty came sickness. Our father's delicate health, during a long series of years, threw on our mother heavy cares, which were instinctively shared with the little child of her almost idolatrous love. And the thoughtful child, with her strong character and large heart, matured rapidly, proving at times a wonderful supporter. She was rich in sympathy, in hopefulness, and even

in resources. Before she was ten years old, she was the nurse of her younger brothers and sister; the hopeful coadjutor, as well as heart's pride, of both her parents; and with her own little fingers at the knitting needle and spinning wheel, she added many a precious sixpence to the resources of the overtaxed guardians of the busy household.

At the age of ten, Lavinia was removed, with the family, to Eaton, N. Y., then a little cluster of log houses in the woods. Here fairly commenced her unvarying life of trial and duty. Previous to this, she had had but few opportunities for instruction in books, and after this none at all beyond the family circle. Our father was her principal teacher; and although the busy child had little time to spare to books, she yet made decided progress. She also managed to find some time for such desultory reading as was

within her reach; but the difficulties in the way of obtaining suitable books were insurmountable. A few odd volumes of Shakspeare, a bad translation of some of Goethe's best things, the Vicar of Wakefield, an old, well-thumbed copy of Paradise Lost, and something of Fielding's which little Viny was told it was not proper for her to read, and consequently, I am afraid, did read, had somehow strayed into the house; and so great was the reverence for books beneath that poor roof, that I do not think our parents could have found it in their hearts to destroy even a bad one. Among the books meeting the full approval of the heads of the family, and so placed conspicuously on the mantel shelf, were Baxter's Saint's Rest, the lives of several honored martyrs and saints, two volumes of sermons, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Grace Abounding. Of course, the old family Bible and

Psalm Book had their time-honored place on the stand.

Lavinia began at a very early age to compose verses. Occasionally they were lively and amusing; but the subdued seriousness of her mind oftener showed itself in mild, sober reflections, indicative of too early maturity. It is remarkable, however, that, though her life was far from a thornless one, her effusions are always perfectly healthy in tone. Notwithstanding their reflective character, they are marred by no murmurings, no sentimental self-pity, or morbid pinings after what could never be; but are frank, pure, truthful copyings out of her own high heart. It has been said that she possessed both courage and self-reliance. With these qualities was united a contempt for meanness and littleness of every sort, which sometimes gave to the glance of her clear hazel eye a withering power. Hence

some of the most spirited of her youthful effusions, both in prose and verse. Of these early writings, for a sad reason, only a few broken scraps remain. One, now before me, was written under circumstances which could scarcely occur any where but in an obscure country corner. Lavinia had invited some of her young companions to pass a social evening with her, and most of the invited came. One or two, however, from some disaffection not infrequent in small communities, declined. In the course of the evening, it was whispered that eavesdroppers were lurking about the windows; and in the morning Lavinia received indubitable evidence of the fact in the shape of a wallet, which had been dropped by one of the listeners. Quick as her tremulous fingers would permit, the indignant little maiden struck off the following lines, enclosed them in the wallet, and sent them to the owner: —

EAVESDROPPING.

When ignorance and pride combined
Blend in some little, sordid mind,
Loaded with guilty fear,
The face may strive to shine in vain;
The telltale eyes unveil the brain,
The countenance looks queer.

But why expose the tender limbs
To rugged winter's cruel whims,
When northern winds blow keen,
By crouching 'neath the midnight eaves? —
A place where none but coward thieves
At such an hour are seen.

And yet the heart not fully dead
To pity one soft drop must shed,
To see the sufferer stand;
Trembling with fear, his pulse scarce beats;
Cold gathering sweat his forehead wets;
He longs to join the band.

But still he dreads to see the face
Where self-approving conscience rests;
He writhes in doubt and pain.

Poor tortured soul, go seek repose,
In peace your winking eyelids close,
Till you can come again.

I have spoken of Lavinia as spirited and self-confident. She was also proud, but not in the common acceptation of the term. It was the pride which springs from courage and truthfulness, not nurtured by outward circumstances, but rather investing these circumstances with its own dignity. She knew that at least one of her parents had been nurtured in comparative luxury; and that neither of them had been previously accustomed to such privations as now pressed sorely upon them. The very culture they strove to give her, placing her as it did beyond the sympathies of most of her young companions, was evidence of their own cultivation. She could not but be aware of this. She could not but know, too, that she possessed a mind capable of something higher than

the dull routine of daily toil, and personal attractions that would have adorned an elevated sphere of life. No nature endowed like hers can long remain ignorant of its own resources. But while this knowledge might have fed her pride, it elevated it into a virtue. She showed her superiority to her position by never being ashamed of it, and by performing faithfully and cheerfully its most menial duties.

CHAPTER II.

MAIDENHOOD.

My own first impressions of this sweet sister of mine are very indistinct, and in many instances wild and exaggerated. I have some shadowy but very pleasant recollections of a face younger than my mother's bending over my pillow at night, and awaking me with a flood of laughing kisses in the morning, and am haunted by a pair of bright lips, in connection with my infantile prayers and hymns. I recollect on one occasion most stubbornly refusing obedience, and with what calm, wise decision this young sister enforced it; and how I rebelled and persisted in rebelling, and how

at last mildly, but with fixed determination, she overcame. Probably I had never resisted her authority before; I know I never did afterward. I recollect too, when voted a stupid child, because I could not learn the alphabet in school, how I retrieved my reputation by taking it from my sister's smiling lips, in a surprisingly short time, and then of being carried by her triumphantly through to "readings," to the astonishment of every body. Still, in all this, and a thousand other mother-acts of hers, there is an indistinctness that makes me doubtful, which, among a mass of recollections, is imaginative, and which real. It is the same with her personal appearance. The large white forehead, the clear hazel eyes with their far away look, the calm, firm mouth, severe except when lighted by a smile, the heavy braids of dark chestnut hair, the white cambric dress, the delicate figure, and the light step, with its

even, though animated tread, come back to me like fragments of a dream, refusing to connect themselves with the better defined images of later years.

When Lavinia was about eighteen years of age, it began to be remarked that the bloom on her cheek was not quite so bright as formerly, and even that its soft roundness was less perfect. She had had too many cares, our mother said, and was fading before she had reached her prime. The question was, how, with six children younger than herself, and *such* a boy-baby, she could be released from care. She herself protested that she was quite well, and then stipulated, if she *must* have a change, that she should be permitted to teach school. There were some grave shakings of the head among her seniors; but she was quite decided — gently and respectfully decided; and so, as usual, she had her way. In the spring of 1824, she left

for the first time the paternal roof, and engaged in teaching a small school in Smithfield, some few miles distant. I do not well recollect how we all survived her absence, but her first visit home was an era.

O, how eagerly we little ones watched for the first glimpse of our mother-sister!

Well do I recollect standing at the corner of the house, with the sun beating on my bare head, the dust blinding my eyes, and my loosened hair and little frock all in a flutter. But the sun went down, and she did not come, and we younger ones were sent crying to bed. The next that I knew, I was so nearly smothered beneath a shower of kisses that I felt very much like setting up a cry of resistance; and then, when I had come to my senses, and did actually cry for joy, I well recollect hearing our mother say, "I told you how it would be; children are always cross when disturbed in their first

sleep." Not the faintest among my recollections on this occasion is the pretty pink hat manufactured for my curly head by my sister's own fingers, and, as usual with her manufactures, made out of "most nothing." She thought of us always, and labored for us; for, though absent in person, she was ever with us in heart — the most devoted, self-sacrificing of daughters and of sisters.

Lavinia assured us repeatedly that she was in the most perfect health; and her bright cheek and happy smile vouched for the truth of her words. She said that the change had done her good; that she had found new books, and become acquainted with pleasant people; and that, when she returned in autumn, she should be able to teach the children a great many things they knew nothing about before. It was such a hopeful, happy, loving visit, that the sunlight of it rested on us long after she was gone.

My sister returned to her school, where she had already secured, as she always did every where, the hearts of all who knew her. It was remarked by her new friends that her visit home had done her no good; for, although she did not return homesick, as they had prophesied, there was yet an appearance of languor about her, painful in one so young and of such high spirits. She, however, continued to perform all her duties, with some additional ones, self-imposed, and also to devote many spare moments to those little acts of friendship which she deemed sacred. But by far the greater part of her time was spent in reading. She also indulged herself in the luxury of versification more freely than she had ever done before. It would be very unfair to attempt forming an opinion of her capabilities, from the two or three specimens of verse that have been accidentally preserved — quite possibly the

very last she would have been willing to exhibit. It seems to be the unanimous opinion of those who knew her, that her talents were of a high order, and only needed cultivation to bring about important results. Only one little scrap of verse, an allusion to her favorite retreat at "Alderbrook," remains of her summer work; and this is, for her, unusually pensive in its tone.

WHEN I WAS FREE FROM CARE.

Oft have I sat, in moonlit hours,
Beside the brook where sweet wild flowers
Perfumed the evening air;
Low drooped the alders, as to trace
Soft mysteries on the water's face,
And I was free from care.

From one old oak, whose branches, green,
Moon-silvered, showed dead blanks between,
Came down a mournful strain.

It was a lonesome whip-poor-will,
Whose notes descended from a hill,
And wandered back again.

There pliant creepers bent to twine
Their freshness round the rugged pine,
And every thing was fair.
How often now fond memory brings
Those pensive hours, on fancy's wings,
When I was free from care!

CHAPTER III.

CHANGE AND BLIGHT.

My poor pen has done thee but feeble justice, my sweet sister, as it has striven to follow thee, at this dim distance, through years of toil, and care, and self-sacrificing devotion, up to that fair nineteenth summer of thine existence. But a better pen than mine would fail in such a picture. It sounds but a little thing, in the world's ear, to say that thou wert our mother's hope and solace; or to tell how thou didst strive to plant the pattering feet of little ones securely in the path of virtue, luring us thither, first, by loving smiles and pleasant words, and fixing us there by noble sentiments and

earnest warnings. But thy spring time fled, even as the golden sunset which mocks the painter's pencil, or as some rich strain of music, which must be heard, not told. True, we have softer, tenderer memories of thee than belong to thine early bloom; but yet the morning freshness is grateful to our hearts, and we linger lovingly around the footsteps of thy departing brightness.

The canker had touched the flower, yet it might have been spared, and even lured back to its first freshness, but for a strange incident.

"Better take care, miss," called out an honest farmer to Lavinia, as she was passing to her school one morning. "There's a mad dog somewhere hereabouts. I first hearn of him scouring away across my big meadow yesterday, and one of my creeturs was bit by some dog last night — the same chap, I'll warrant."

"But he's probably far out of the neighborhood by this time," returned Lavinia.

"May be, miss; but there's no harm in being on the lookout. He'd be an ugly customer to spring upon one in some of these out-o'-the-way places."

Lavinia thanked the farmer for his caution, and passed on, thinking no more of the mad dog. She was naturally fearless and incredulous of danger, and she moreover knew that many a poor dog had been chased to death, that gave no evidence of hydrophobia. That night, as was her frequent practice, she staid at the school house some time after her pupils had gone away, and then slowly set out on her walk homeward. Formerly, her light, elastic step could not move slowly; but now exercise, in place of its former invigorating influence, rendered her languid; and so, after accomplishing part of the distance, she sat down on a

green knoll to muse and rest. She had sat thus for some moments, when she remarked a dog, at some distance, trotting leisurely in the middle of the road. At first she bestowed on him only a casual glance, for the conversation of the morning did not immediately occur to her. As he drew nearer, however, she could perceive that he was very lank and dirty, and that his tongue protruded at full length from a mouth covered with foam and dripping with slaver. Her first thought was of the fence; but just in that spot it was hopelessly high. Then she remembered having heard that a rabid dog would often pass an object without looking up; and she wondered if perfect stillness was not her wisest course. But she had not the nerve to pass an ordeal so severe, and she finally concluded to glide along close by the fence, until she came to where it was lower, and see if she could not thus elude the observation of the animal.

The three propositions had occupied scarcely a second of time; and, creeping stealthily from the knoll, she crouched by the fence, and ran fleetly in its shadow. The next moment, as she threw a glance over her shoulder, she saw that the dog had abandoned the road, and was following closely on her track. It was now a simple question of speed; and on the grass, over the rough knolls, she pursued her way to disadvantage. She therefore darted at once into the middle of the road, and, without ever looking back, ran for life. On — on — expecting at every moment that those terrible teeth would seize upon her, and feeling at every fresh strain, not the vigor of healthful exertion, nor the superhuman strength which sometimes waits on terror, but an inner yielding, a relaxation, not so much of muscle, as a failing at the very fountain of effort. Still she pressed forward, — blind, giddy, fainting, — till at

last she fell. The dog, now approaching one of his wildest paroxysms, dashed madly on without touching, of course without seeing her, and was soon far away in the distance. She had not fainted, but it was some time before she could fully comprehend her safety. At length she gathered herself up, shook the dust from her dress, sat down by the wayside to compose herself for a moment, and then arose and tottered feebly homeward.

The next morning she was not well enough to go into school, and the next and next the same, and finally a messenger came to tell us she was ill; and, with a sad sinking of the heart, our father set forth to bring her home. I am afraid we little ones were not very sorry for our sister's sickness, and only thought all day how sweet it would be to have her with us again; but we learned to be sorry when we saw her pale cheek and languid smile.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEW LIFE.

For many weeks after Lavinia abandoned her school, she was confined to her room and bed. Physicians were called, and learned consultations held over her; but her disease, whatever it might have been, baffled the skill of the most skilful. They administered palliatives, however, and by the aid of these she gained strength sufficient to move about the house again, the mournful shadow of her former bright self.

From childhood, as has already been seen, she was thoughtful; and she had often been the subject of serious religious impressions, but until now, they had proved evanescent.

Now, however, when the dear friends whom she had almost idolized could do nothing for her, when the bright world in which she had gloried for its very beauty seemed receding from her, when her warm life was chilled, her day darkened, the span-long thread of life drawn seemingly to its last atom, she was startled, terrified, agonized.

"I cannot die! — what shall I do to live?" was the incessant cry of her heart.

Her past life, with its fair exhibition of moral loveliness, — the pure, self-denying, maiden life which every body admired, — seemed to her worse than mockery; and the self-denouncing author of "Grace Abounding" could not enumerate against himself a blacker list of sins than did this sweet child of love and gentleness, whom no one had the heart to accuse of a fault.

"All self, vile self!" she would say to her well-meaning consolers. "It was only

because they were *my* parents, *my* brothers, *my* sisters — it was to make *myself*, my poor, miserable *self*, happy! And through it all, I never remembered the God who was overwhelming me with mercies — the Savior who died to redeem me from deserved woe: it was all self, self, self!"

The doctors said that her peculiar state of mind was hurrying her to the grave; and those who were familiar with her natural cheerfulness of disposition, even her religious friends, believed her unsparing self-condemnation to be the result of a morbid state of mind, induced by disease. So every resource was adopted to decoy her into forgetfulness. She was surrounded by cheerful young friends and pleasant objects, and as soon as she had sufficient strength, she was urged into frequent visiting; and in every way (such simple, innocent ways as were at the command of her friends) subjected to

such influences as must have diverted a mind of less firmness, or less tenacity of purpose, than hers. As it was, nothing proved in the least effectual. That which her friends and physicians mistook for the morbid workings of a distempered mind was the silent brooding of the Spirit of God. One of the places she visited was in the family of a clergyman; but even here, though she constantly sought it, she could find nothing suited to her case. She came home more depressed in spirit than she went away; the momentary agony indeed blunted, but her mind settled down into a stern, unyielding gloom. Her physician now became seriously alarmed, fancying that he discovered symptoms of mental aberration; and finally begged, through his daughters, a visit from his patient, that he might the more carefully study her singular disease. Here she was left more to herself than she

had been previously, during her illness; and she devoted her days to Scripture studies, and her nights to prayer.

"I cared nothing for these things when I was well," she thought, one evening, "but now I am sick and helpless, I am ready to cry and pray. It is right that I should not be heard. It is of no use to read — no use to pray. God refuses to accept me. It is just, but it is terrible."

As she said this to herself, she impatiently fluttered the leaves of her Bible, and listlessly glanced downward, reading on without understanding a word, till her attention was arrested by the text, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Rest! ah, that was precisely what she longed for — rest to the drooping body and the sin-sick soul. How had she labored to free herself from the chains of sin, from the heavy burden of her

own depravity, while they had only riveted themselves more closely round her, and weighed her down with agony unutterable! But, "Come to *Me*;"—it was simply to *come*. She had read the verse a hundred times before, but she had never comprehended its real meaning until now. It was like a draught from some cool fountain in a burning desert. It fell on her perturbed senses like the "Peace! be still!" upon the waters of Galilee. It sunk down into her soul, and calmed its wild pulsations forevermore. Why, she had nothing to do, after all. She had not to purify herself; she had only to submit, and be purified. This was far better than the other way, and she only wondered she had not always seen it so—wondered she had heard Christians talk all her life, without understanding what they meant.

That night she slept more sweetly than

she had done for many long weeks before; and in the morning the surprised doctor pronounced her decidedly better.

The late Rev. Nathaniel Kendrick, D. D., in an article published in the New York Baptist Register, speaks of Lavinia's mental exercises thus: "In taking a retrospect of her past life, she saw nothing on which she could dwell with comfort, or which could afford any relief or mitigation of her offences. Though moral, obedient, and lovely, yet discovering all her conduct dictated by a depraved heart, she saw in the light of divine truth that all was vile. Even those things which she had regarded with complacency, as delightful and virtuous in the judgment of this world, she now found, to her astonishment, when viewed in the light of heaven, to be selfish, loathsome, and justly meriting the displeasure of God. In view of her sins, she discovered no reasonable hope of escap-

ing the wrath of God. God, she learned, was holy, and could not look with approbation on sin. With her sins set in order before her, and God ready to take vengeance, her heart sunk within her, and she cried out, 'Lord save! I perish!' Soon her anguish ceased, and her weary soul found rest.

"During a short period subsequent, she was fearful lest she should have been deceived. She examined herself, and prayed for light. Christians visited her, and, after obtaining a comfortable hope for her, endeavored to enlighten her mind and strengthen her hope, by presenting from the Scriptures the evidences of pardon. She believed. Stimulated by a sense of duty and love for the children of God, she related the reason of her hope, and was received by baptism into the Second Baptist Church in Eaton, New York."

The same writer adds, "In her dispo-

sition, she was gentle and patient in affliction. Often she was deeply impressed with her own sinfulness, struggling for deliverance; at other times she was strong in the faith, giving glory to God. She made the Bible her constant companion, from which she obtained understanding and intelligible views of the doctrines of Christ. But few have been called, in divine Providence, to suffer more severely, and few have endured suffering with greater patience. She never murmured or complained, but regarded her affliction as coming by the appointment of her heavenly Father. Often she repeated, 'Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.'"

CHAPTER V.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

I SUPPOSE, if we could look into the human hearts that are throbbing all around us, we should find in each a long picture gallery of radiant visions wrought by the artist Memory, and hung away to be peeped at now and then, when the present disappoints us, or the future refuses to brighten at our bidding. As for my own gallery, — which, by the way, may as well be named a lumber room at once, — it is well stored with gay, gurgling streams, and waving meadows, and solemn old forests, and flowers perversely growing by deceitful marshes, and delicious wild berries, and ducks' nests in

the sedges, and fantastic play rings, with a school house for the background, and rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes, and flying locks of threaded amber, and glossy nuts hid away beneath gay-colored leaves, and white fleecy showers and icy slopes, and wonderful hand-sleds, and Parian palaces cut in solid snow, and sylvan bowers braided of summer greenery, and much more, grotesque and beautiful, and sad and gay, all piled confusedly together. But there is one picture among them dearer to me than all the rest. Many a museful hour do I spend over a small, white-curtained room, with a simple bed in one corner, a table at its head, with a Bible and a glass of flowers always on it; an open, wood fire, burning cheerily; a pale, sweet face pressing the pillow, or bending, in ill-concealed weariness, over some work of love; and I, a tiny maiden, presiding over all with baby dignity, pleased

mistress of dust brush and poker, and the pet, companion, and nurse of the drooping blossom by my side.

Indeed, this small memento would fail in one of its principal objects, — as a tribute of gratitude, — were I to omit saying more of self than would otherwise be desirable. From circumstances, both of mental and physical organization, I was a peculiarly dependent child, and required a degree of watchful attention, which cannot often be accorded one in so numerous a family. As soon as my sister's invalidism seemed a settled thing, and it was decided that, notwithstanding there was but little hope of her ultimate recovery, she was yet in no immediate danger, she took me under her own charge entirely. When she was well enough, she taught me to sew, to look after my own wardrobe, to put her room in order, &c.; and when she was too ill to

wait on herself, she taught me — with a sweet patience which I did not then appreciate — to perform many offices for her, of which my little fingers would have been thought scarcely capable. Of course, I overrated my usefulness, and she generously assisted the delusion; for her object was to cultivate in me a taste for usefulness. In the mean time, she was unwearied in her endeavors to regulate other tendencies. Peculiarities of temperament and disposition she watched over, and formed, and trained with such wisdom as now I can only wonder at. What a less judicious hand would have checked or striven to crush, she fostered and directed, till by degrees she gained the entire control of a little mind hitherto exceedingly impatient under discipline. As my constitution was somewhat fragile, many of our friends evinced some anxiety about certain rhym-

ing propensities, which were thought to be evidences of precociousness; but which were, in truth, only ludicrous imitations of the sister I admired. Whether Lavinia was aware of this, or whether she knew that the surest way to convert the lurking fondness into a passion would be to attempt checking it, I cannot say; but she quietly opposed her own judgment to all prophecies of evil; and so not only protected the inclination, but to some extent fostered it. She selected subjects for me, and, when she was strong enough, would take me on her knee and develop some of the points most striking to the mind of a child, and then send me away to compose. Then, when she thought I had been by myself long enough, there would be sure to arise something she wanted done, and which nobody could do for her quite so well as I. So, of course, I was proud to

do it, and the versifying would very easily and naturally pass into the background. She would never allow my little efforts to be laughed at, however ridiculous, still less would she permit them to be wondered at; so gradually I came to class verse-making along side of dusting and patchwork, and other evidences of my small handicraft.

One little incident, which occurred in my sixth or seventh summer, and which I recollect very distinctly, will serve to illustrate her general course. I had lost a little schoolmate, and, as usual, felt called upon to embalm my grief in an elegy. I sat in state on my sister's knee, and was repeating my long string of unintelligible verses with all the impressiveness of which my voice was capable, when a friend, for a time domesticated with us, chanced to pass through the room. I was turning off at the moment the following *remarkable* stanza:—

Her golden hair in ringlets curled
Adown her lovely neck;
But the rude blast of death unfurled
A calm and snowless deck.

A long, loud burst of laughter made me pause indignantly; for tears were in my own eyes, and it seemed to me very heartless for any body to laugh at such solemn things as these. My sister, too, declared quite positively that there was nothing to laugh at; that a little girl's verses could not be expected to be perfect, any more than her sewing or her sweeping; and that, for her part, she thought them very pretty.

"Doubtless you understand this matter best," said our laughing critic; "but it does seem to me you are spoiling the child completely. I suppose you never point out her defects."

"Simple ones, I do — great ones, no; she is too young."

A short conversation ensued, of which I understood but little, except that my sister and our guest maintained opposite opinions; till finally he rose, and, patting me indulgently on the head, said, "Well, well, child, make verses, if you must; but don't use words you know nothing about."

"Begging your pardon," exclaimed Lavinia, with an earnestness but ill disguised by her assumed playfulness, "I will have no such rule established over my pupil. She has more ideas than language, and more feeling than either; and she shall use words just as it happens, until she has read more, or gets big enough to use a dictionary."

Our friend made some reply, which I did not well comprehend, about "vehicles of thought," "accuracy," "perspicuity," &c.; to which, with a sad sweetness, Lavinia replied, "Others will look after that; I

have but a few hours and a little strength; and I know best how I can do the child good."

But it was in the matter of religious training that my sister made me most deeply her debtor. As her own religious character developed and her faith strengthened, she set herself deliberately and earnestly to the task of enlightening my understanding and arousing my heart. She may have had her hours of darkness and despondency; but I knew nothing of them, and always saw her as the triumphant, rejoicing Christian. Her prayers at midnight, always earnest and often agonized, alone showed that her heart was capable of being troubled. Her growth in grace was rapid; and she soon came to be regarded by others, as well as her worshipping little satellite of a sister, as a being less of earth than of heaven. She was so

patient, so loving, so self-sacrificing, so thoughtful of others' good, so radiant with the beauty of holiness, that her influence over all with whom she associated was irresistible. I was with her at her readings, at her prayers; and I almost *felt* her thoughts while watching the daily loveliness and symmetry of her life. And these lessons, though often crippled in their influence by a thousand follies, have only become more sacred, and more highly valued, as time has developed their excellence. I think that my sister habitually rose at midnight to pray; and I recollect many a night waking too soon, and striving wearily to keep my sleepy eyes open, and then closing them, probably, just at the wrong moment. But it was a comfort to me to know that, though I slept, the accustomed prayer had gone up, and as I fully believed then, and still believe, been registered above.

There was one respect in which Lavinia's religious teachings were somewhat peculiar. She delighted in those rich, sublime, Christian doctrines on which the apostles loved to dwell — the sovereignty of God; the full, free atonement of Christ; justification by faith rather than works; the sanctifying influences of the Spirit; and she did not seem to consider them any more above the comprehension of a little child's mind than they were above her own. She opened the way to Christ so simply, and so clearly, that my baby conceptions have been the teachers of my riper years; and I fully believe that, even in the most glorious of Christian doctrines, if it be properly presented, "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err."

CHAPTER VI.

INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS.

During this illness my sister read a great deal, and wrote more than when in health; but her thoughts found expression now less often in verse than in prose. Occasionally she turned off a trifle to please a friend; but she gave it little thought, and was glad not to have such favors asked. Of these careless, unstudied effusions, the following only are extant: —

AN ACROSTIC.*

No more o'er Scotland's flowery hills
Or dewy vales I rove;

* Begin with the initial of the last line, and spell upward.

Silent the voice beside her rills,
Lone the green summer grove.

In vain fond fancy wings me back,
While memories, in sweet guise,
Steal pleading round my exile track,
And dim my longing eyes.

My native land! fair sunny land
Of spirits true and free,
How thou dost clasp in thy strong hand
The heart that turns from thee!

ODE,

Sung at a National Festival, Eaton, N. Y., July 4th, 1826.

All hail the present happy day,
This era of the earth!
The fiftieth anniversary
Of glorious freedom's birth!

Hail, ye victorious heroes, too,
Who struck for liberty;

Who laid the proud oppressors low,
And made a nation free!

Come, join our happy festival,
Adorn our joyous feast;
No clamorous war-whoop greets us now;
The din of battle's ceased.

Come, join our happy festival,
Ye men of silvered hair,
Who spurned in youth th' inglorious yoke
That menial spirits wear.

A free, a powerful nation, now,
Is proud America;
Her sons have torn the laurels from
The Empress of the Sea.

AN ELEGY

ON THE LOSS OF A VERY DEAR FRIEND.

O, ask me not why the fair muse is clad in mourning,
Or why her lone strains such deep sorrow display;

A fair flower is blasted that lately was blooming,
And in yonder still grave is mouldering away.

Though lilies were emblems of Elsie's complexion,
And roses resembled her cheeks in their bloom,
Those frail, fleeting beauties ne'er gained our affection,
Nor caused us to weep when shut down in the tomb.

'Twas the spirit immortal, in beautiful blossom,
Bespangled and nourished with heavenly dews,
For religion and virtue, in holy connection,
Adorned her meek soul with perennial hues.

O, together we'll bow, our hearts heavy with mourning,
By the green sodded grave where our treasure lies low;
Our prayers and our tears o'er this couch of her slumbers
Together shall rise, and together shall flow.

Those mutely-crossed hands into kindred dust mouldering
We have oft seen relieving the sick and distressed;
Those cold, silent lips we have often seen pouring
The sweet balm of love into sorrow's lone breast.

She has gone; and we mourn her meek ministry ended;
We mourn the soul blossom transplanted on high;

We mourn that a shadow falls drear on the hearth
stone;
We mourn the hushed lip and the slumber-closed
eye.

But hark! what strange notes drown the voice of our
wailing?
What high sounds of triumph greet gladly our ears?
'Tis the saints with their harps, — Heaven's Bride in her
glory, —
And lo! in the midst our own Elsie appears.

O, there, in sweet rapture, her soul is recounting
The trials she passed while on earth she remained;
And to her all-wise and long-suffering Redeemer
Ascribing the praise for the conquest she gained.

Arise, we, and cast off the symbols of sorrow;
No longer we'll mourn our sweet Elsie is gone,
But pray that some star from her crown of rejoicing
May fall on our spirits, and usher the dawn.

Lavinia kept a voluminous journal, said by those who have seen it to be rich in

Christian experience; and she was also the author of numerous essays, either on decidedly religious topics, or those most readily turned to religious purposes. These, with all her papers, were confided to a friend of the family, after her death, to be arranged for publication; but by a serious misfortune they were all destroyed. So the few scraps given above are all that remain to tell of a mind that struggled through innumerable difficulties, — to a beauty and ripeness of which these are no fair indications, — and then went up to a higher school. So God ordered it; and all that is left for us is the meek duty of submission. "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

CHAPTER VII.

LAST PREPARATIONS.

The subject of Christian missions, which was then beginning to loom up largely before the churches, occupied its full share of Lavinia's attention. There was something in it suited to the enthusiasm and resoluteness of her natural character, as well as to her elevated faith, her warm love, and her high views of Christian duty. But it was little she could do, little she could give, except her prayers; and whatever the influence of those prayers may have been on the world at large, they have most assuredly fallen back in floods of balm, on aching brows and troubled hearts,

for whose well being they were not originally offered.

During the last three years of her life, Lavinia never left the house except for an occasional short drive. To go up to the house of the Lord, to join in the worship of the sanctuary, would, indeed, have been to her a sweet gratification; but she bore this and all other deprivations cheerfully, her cheerfulness increasing as her long-protracted sufferings deepened. To "worship God in company" with others who loved him was, however, a privilege for which she had an irresistible longing; and as it was impossible for her to attend the meetings of the church, an arrangement was made by which some of the meetings could come to her. A prayer meeting was held at our house in the middle of the week, and on Saturday evenings a licentiate from the theological school in the neighboring vil-

lage of Hamilton, or occasionally one of its professors, with his table drawn up near Lavinia's door, would preach a sermon to a full and attentive audience. Among those who thus ministered to the spiritual wants of my dying sister are some whose praise is now in the churches, and some who have gone up to receive the rewards of a life of faithfulness above. One there is still toiling amid wild Karen jungles; another follows the watercourses — almost as wild, and far more magnificent — of our own western territory, with the desert cry, "Repent! repent!" forever on his lips; and a third has laid his frail figure, in Moses-like burial, on a far distant, burning shore. It may be that Lavinia caught some of her missionary spirit from these men; and they, on the other hand, may have been stimulated, at times, by words of lofty cheer from her; for the impulse to

great deeds as often comes from the sick room, if it be a room of prayer, as from the council hall of the strong and brave.

Through the winter of 1829, Lavinia scarcely left her room; and the opening of spring was the signal for her rapid decline. At the commencement of her illness, she had a strong desire to recover; afterwards her prayer had been for patience to live out her appointed time; and this had finally been superseded by a sweet submission to whatever should prove the will of her heavenly Father.

"I have no choice," she would say. "If God pleases to take me home, I shall indeed enjoy the release; but if he so orders it that I shall linger on, it will be because he has yet something for me to do or suffer; and that, too, will afford me pleasure. It is so delightful to be helpless in the hands of God!"

Still, through all her pain and deprivation, her natural enjoyment of life was not diminished. I remember with what interest she watched from her window the melting of the snow, and how joyfully she greeted the little patches of dead grass, with their faint hue of just-awakening green; and how our father, at her request, brought in fresh bits of turf, and little tufts of moss, that she might inhale their spring-like odor. And then, with what exclamations of delight did she receive the violets, and hepaticas, and spring beauties that little Kate and I took pride in gathering! "It is a charming world," she would say; "but heaven is still lovelier."

One day she expressed a desire to take a drive, saying she wished to see the little brook where she knew the violets grew, and the pretty knolls above, covered with the graceful little claytonia. The doctor

said it would of course fatigue her, but could do no material injury; and so she was indulged. It was a day of apprehension for our parents, and of joy for the rest of us. Lavinia looked so *well*, all cloaked and bonneted like ourselves, that it did not seem possible she could be in danger; and although the effects of the unwonted exertion kept her on her pillow for several days, I fully believed that she would be quite as well as during the preceding summer. But she never stepped over the threshold again.

Some few weeks subsequent to this incident, Lavinia, after long and tearful remonstrance from our mother, sent for a seamstress, "to make up," as she said, "the children's spring clothing." She had done this ever since her illness, assisting with her own hands when she was able, and superintending when she was not strong enough to share the labor. She was cer-

tainly more ill this spring than she had been before; but she could still walk from the bed to her arm chair. She spent hour after hour in reading, though now her only book was "the dear old Bible," that, she said, "grew fresher and sweeter every day;" and she was still able to take charge of Kate and me, and to interest herself, as usual, in the miscellaneous affairs of the family. We little ones were surprised at the inexplicable opposition of our mother to this natural arrangement; but we were not long in sympathizing with it, at least, so far as a vague emotion of alarm and wonder could sympathize with a clearly-defined, terrible reality. I remember what a feeling of awe crept over me, when called one morning to my sister's room to be measured for a *black dress.* I do not think that it occurred to me on what occasions black dresses are usually worn, or that I

formed any definite conception of why this had been purchased, instead of the pretty colors which my sister usually made quite a little study of choosing; but the sombre hue sent a gloom to my heart and a chill through my frame, so that I shivered involuntarily. Lavinia doubtless noted the feeling, for she immediately made some pleasant remark in her usual cheerful tone; playfully patted my drooping shoulders, which, she said, needed a touch of that which supported Hatty's and Kate's; and in the end quite reassured me, without saying a word on the subject that had excited my wondering apprehension. There was one, however, whose heart was too near breaking to be so readily reassured.

"You will have enough to do, mother," Lavinia would say to her, tenderly; "and it gives me sincere pleasure to attend to these little things once more." Then she would

add other consolations when we children were out of hearing, saying how much pleasanter it would be for the little girls to associate the memory of her living fingers with their black dresses, than to have them put on, strange and new, when she was gone. With how much more comfort she should go her little journey, having performed her duties up to the latest moment! and how pleasant it was for her to anticipate that the farewell over her grave would be spoken in meek Christian sorrow, without the distraction of worldly cares! Then she would say that it seemed hardly suitable to put on mourning apparel for one simply going home, like her; but still she knew we should miss her, and it would be selfish to ask those who had loved her so long not to be sorry, and not to express their sorrow in the usual way. She did not wish to change the nature of things;

she only wished to make them appear to us simple and natural, as they really were, and to lead us to associate her smiles and hopeful words with the badges of regret for her absence. Then she would add, caressingly, that she did not do this *stoically*, as some had said; that sickness had not made her hardhearted or selfish; that she did pity us, did love us more than ever before in her life, and longed to do all for us in her power before she went away. To be sure, she would tell us, her own thoughts turned naturally to heaven; but she knew that we had a dull journey before us; that there would often be clouds about our heads, and thorns in our paths; and she would pray with all her heart to be permitted to stay and assist us, if she did not know we had a far better Helper.

The sable wardrobes, even from the bonnet down to the shoetie, were completed,

and laid away, under her careful supervision. Then a white dress of her own was brought up from some obscure corner, a few other simple white articles put in repair, and then the seamstress was dismissed.

Lavinia next requested that her former pastor, the Rev. Dr. N. Kendrick, should be sent for, to preach her funeral sermon; and she chose for his text a subject on which she had doubtless pondered through many hours of pain and suffering, and deep, abiding joy: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.)

"And now, mother," she said, "my earthly work is ended. I can do nothing for you, or father, or the children, but to pray; and I need nothing myself but what

you will do much better than I can direct. So I will just turn my thoughts inward for a little. It is almost over, mother."

"It is almost over!" often broke, sobbingly, from the heart of our mother, during those few closing days.

CHAPTER VIII.

FINAL TRIUMPH.

Lavinia's arrangements were no sooner completed than she began to decline very rapidly. She could no longer walk from the bed to her chair; and even to move herself in bed, or lift a cup with her thin, pale fingers, became too much for her decaying strength. She would look up with a quiet smile as she failed in some little attempt to help herself, and say, cheerfully, "You see it will not be long, mother."

She held no formal conversations with any one. She had taught us long and faithfully, and prayed with us, and exhibited before us "the beauty of holiness"

in her own beautiful life; and now, at her parting, she seemed to have no final words but those of tenderness and cheer.

One day Lavinia sent for our mother, and remarked, "Something odd has happened to me. I feel strangely well and strong. I believe I could walk to the window as easily as I ever did in my life; and I should like to look out on the beautiful world once more. O mother, it is *so* beautiful!"

It was evident our mother began at once to think of all the tales she had ever heard of miraculous restorations; and a sudden hope, which her better judgment assured her was groundless, dawned on her yearning heart. Lavinia arose from her bed, and, unassisted, but with a pair of arms hovering about her, ready to encircle her at any moment they were needed, walked firmly to the window. Here she

leaned upon the sill, pressed her thin, glowing cheek against the pane, and mused long and pleasantly. At least, it *seemed* her thoughts were pleasant, for there was a very bright smile upon her lip. At last she rose. "Heaven is no doubt lovelier," she said; "but it needs only two things to make one long to stay here forever."

"What two, Lavinia?"

"Christ and holiness."

She had gone but a step or two before she tottered feebly, then reeled, and was caught in the hovering arms, and borne helplessly to her pillow. She attempted to speak, but was too much exhausted. After a few moments, she was seized with a violent paroxysm of pain, which convulsed her slight, attenuated form most fearfully.

"Poor child! the exertion was too much for you," our mother said, as the distress partially subsided.

"No, mother."

Another paroxysm succeeded, and prevented, for the moment, further utterance. When she could again speak, she lifted her eyes pityingly.

"Don't be troubled, mother; nothing I have done has hurt me."

"What is it, then, my darling?"

"Only what we have expected so long."

"Lavinia!"

"*Dear* mother!"

"It cannot be — you do not think ——"

"Yes, mother, yes; it is the death agony. Try to bear up, mother — it is worse for you than for me; but try — I shall not suffer long; and 'Jesus can make a dying bed' — you know the verse, mother."

The words came from her gaspingly, and in broken fragments, for her sufferings were fearful to behold. And every now and then, in the intervals of her painful strug-

gles, came the pleading words, "Try to bear it, mother — it will not be long."

After midnight, the violence of her sufferings was abated, and she sunk into a heavy though unquiet slumber, which continued through the morning. My own recollections of the sick room come in occasional gleams, with long, dim spaces between. I do not know how it happened that little Kate and I were shut away from it, for I know it was heart-breaking to both of us; but I recollect that a good-natured woman tried to amuse us, and that, at length, Kate remained with her peacefully, while I wandered off by myself. What could I do for my precious sister, who had done so much for me? Suddenly I recollected a farmer's garden, not quite a mile distant, abounding in roses; and I ran to it as fleetly as my small feet would carry me, and returned with a well-laden pinafore. They

were looking for me; and my flowers, alas! were doomed to shed their fragrance only on a shroud. Lavinia had awakened, and the family were gathered around her bed. She looked from one to another with a tender smile, but made no effort to speak. When questioned, she opened her lips, gasped helplessly, closed them again, and answered by signs that she was not in pain, that she trusted in the Savior, and that she was happy. It needed no stronger confirmation of the latter than her sweet face, flooded with joyousness, which was yet subdued, as though in pity to the weeping group she was leaving. Finally, however, the glad spirit triumphed even over the yearnings of the heart. A sudden illumination overspread her face, her eye kindled and glowed with unearthly intensity, her whole frame stirred to a forward, upward movement, as though the exulting spirit

could not stay to be disencumbered of its weight; and in a clear, ringing voice she shouted, "Glory! glory! my Father!—Jesus!" and with this dearest of all dear names upon her lips, she passed away.

It must be very sweet to "sleep in Jesus" after such a life of care and suffering as hers. It must be glorious to tread the courts of heaven, untrammelled by these sin-wrought manacles of pain and woe.

INVOCATION

TO MY SISTER IN HEAVEN.

My sister, when the evening wanes,
And midnight hours creep on, —
When hushed is every earthly sound,
And all my cares are gone, —

'Tis then into my quiet room
Thou glidest as of yore;
And close I seat me at thy side,
Where oft I've sat before.

Then I am not as in the day,
But grow again a child,
Simple and loving as when first
Thy lips upon me smiled.

There, with thine arm about my waist,
Thy fingers on my brow, —
Those long, thin fingers, parting back
The clustering hair, — and thou

Pale as the unsunned violet
Which opens by the rill,
I sit and gaze into thine eyes,
Deep, dark, and loving, still.

And then I hear thy soft, low voice,
Which always touched my heart,
And weep because thou tellest me
How near to heaven thou art.

And still thou speak'st of angel forms
That bow before the throne,
And sayst the little one thou'st loved
Shall ne'er be left alone.

But when, an angel too, thou hast
Thy robes of glory on,
Thou'lt hover round her pillowed rest
Till morning light shall dawn.

And ever, through life's mazy way,
Thou'lt guide her wayward feet,
And be the first, her spirit freed,
In yonder home to greet.

And, sister sweet, I've felt thy care
In danger o'er me thrown;
And when cold hearts were gathering near,
I have not been alone.

Long years have wheeled their weary round
Since, dark and deep, they laid
Thy coffined form, and heaped the earth,
And bowed their heads, and prayed, —

Then turned away, and talked of spring
And of the sunny day;
As though the earth *could* smile again
When thou hadst passed away.

Oft since I've trod a thorny path
Of loneliness and pain,
Of clouded skies, and blighted flowers,
And sorrow's ceaseless rain.

I've drunk from out a bitter cup;
With care and grief have striven;
But then, the rustle of thy wing
Has brought me nearer heaven.

Then come, my angel guard, to-night;
My heart is full of gloom;
Come with thy quiet step and smile,
And seat thee in my room, —

And clasp me, sister, in thine arms,
And hold me to thy breast;
For, by the thronging cares of earth,
I'm wearied and oppressed.

And let me close my aching lids,
And sleep upon that arm
Which used to seem enough to me
To shield from every harm.

I'm weary now, I'm weary now;
I fain would be at rest;
Yet closer twine thy guardian arms,
And fold me to thy breast.

PART II.

HARRIET.

HARRIET.

Some five years younger than our lost Lavinia, with a brother now in the unseen world between them, was my sister Harriet. She was born in Bedford, N. H., November 15, 1811, and at the age of five years was removed by her parents to Eaton, N. Y.

With her bright golden hair, her large soft eyes of the lightest hazel, her white forehead delicately crossed by the blue veins, and her round cheek answering in hue to every changing emotion of her impressible heart, Harriet presented a charming contrast to the dark-eyed, thoughtful,

self-disciplined elder sister, who, with perhaps higher claims to real beauty, seemed always to hide her personal attractions behind a singular elevation of thought and character. Indeed, from earliest childhood Harriet was in almost every respect directly the reverse of Lavinia. It seemed impossible to make her feel a care, or to throw upon her a responsibility. She was as active as a kitten or a bird, or any other playful, graceful thing; but it did not seem to her a matter of the smallest moment on what her activity was expended. She had her little tasks, like the rest of us; and though somewhat adroit in gliding away from them, she never rebelled when fairly caught; but while perplexing every body else with her playfulness, she accomplished her own share, apparently without effort or thought, and then bounded away to her plays. If her figure had been less delicate,

her movements less graceful, or her face less *spirituelle* in its ever-varying expression, or if her clear voice had been capable of a discordant note, she would have been called a hoiden; but as it was, though she ran wild races with her brothers over bog and bramble, making the fields and woods ring with her merry laughter, and came home at night with her dress torn and her golden locks flying, nothing of this sort could detract from the inherent grace and delicacy of which she seemed the glad impersonation. Wild and wayward she certainly was; but it was not in her nature to be boisterous and rude, or in the slightest degree masculine. Her small feet seemed made for fleetness, her face for April sunshine, dashed now and then by the shadow of a shower, and her lithe figure for purposeless activity; and no one could have the cruelty to impose restraints which would in all proba-

bility crush a nature at once fragile, buoyant, and deeply sensitive.

There was a great deal of serious concern among our elders as to how all this would end, what would be the final development of such a butterfly existence; but the subject of the concern, if appealed to, only laughed, and went on as thoughtlessly as ever. Yet she was not selfish in her thoughtlessness; for, although she certainly preferred slipping merrily away from a task to what she considered a dull plodding performance of it, she needed but a hint of suffering or sorrow to call forth the most unbounded self-sacrifice. And there was a breadth of magnanimity in all her acts of kindness, a bold individualism in her generous impulses, which added to them a peculiar charm, and at the same time proved the rare quality of the heart from which they emanated.

With better educational privileges than Lavinia, and much quicker perceptive faculties, she was not half so good a scholar; for she lacked the power of application, and lacked also those incentives to cultivate the power which come with reflection. She read poetry, and looked poetry from her beaming face, and acted poetry in her loving, happy life; but she never attempted to write a line. She was one of the most charming conversationists that nature ever made, (for she owed nothing to art,) and would tell amusing stories far into the small hours of night; but she would write nothing, not even a letter, if she could possibly avoid it.

The first event that ever stirred the depths of Harriet's nature was the death of our sister Lavinia. She was too near her age to be taught and trained by her, as I had been; but she leaned always on

Lavinia's stronger nature, and loved her with the passionate intensity inseparable from her idolatrous nature. I have a distinct impression of her sweet face, wild with alarm and bewilderment, at the death-bed scene; but I was so absorbed in my own great grief, that I have no after recollection of her till we gathered around Lavinia's grave. The coffin lid was lifted for a last look at the precious clay within, when Harriet, with a low cry, sprang forward, laid her face against the cold face of the dead, and sobbed aloud. After a little time she was removed with gentle force, and the coffin closed and lowered to its dark receptacle. With the falling of the first dull clods upon the lid, another low, wild cry of agony escaped her, and she involuntarily stretched forth her arms, as though offering their frail shield to one who had ever shielded her. Then, with one hand

pressed closely over her lips, and the other clinging convulsively to her supporter, she stood shivering with uncontrollable emotion until the terrible ordeal was ended.

From this day forth Harriet was changed. A softened, subdued tenderness stole over her bright face, melting at times into a touching expression, irresistibly eloquent in its mute, unconscious pathos. But she did not droop, as many of her friends had predicted. On the contrary, she seemed to gather up strength for her new position of eldest daughter and sister, and in doing so betrayed a vigor of intellect and character the existence of which had never before been suspected. She could not all at once take Lavinia's place in the household, but she strove to do what she could; and all her efforts were characterized by a calm deliberateness, which gave ample promise of final success. In the autumn after the

death of Lavinia, our parents removed to the vicinity of Morrisville, some three or four miles from Eaton; and here, ere long, our small, poorly-furnished rooms were made sunny with many a simple evidence of Harriet's taste and skill.

It is singular that, while the death of our sister wrought such an entire change in Harriet's nature as to prove that the impression must have been of the deepest and most absorbing kind, it did not for nearly a year seem to induce any religious reflection. During the winter of 1830 she attended a protracted meeting at Morrisville; and as the spring advanced, she began very gradually to show some serious interest in religious things. But in nothing was the great change in her character more strikingly evinced than in her conduct under religious impressions. She was now as calm and dispassionate as she had once

been impetuous; "examining her exercises with the severest scrutiny, and receiving nothing as testimony of her adoption until brought to the test of the Bible."

The writer quoted in the last sentence has given a further sketch of her life and character, which is here subjoined:—

"She possessed from her childhood a delicate constitution. An early attachment to study, with ordinary advantages, secured to her a well-disciplined and cultivated mind, which was naturally investigating, clear, and discriminating.

"Enjoying the blessings of paternal admonition, dictated by pious principles, she ever paid to religion and its advocates a becoming respect; but not until the spring of 1830 did she manifest an anxiety to be personally interested in that Savior whom she had been taught to reverence. Now she felt that she was a sinner against God,

and that nothing but the application of the blood of Christ could prepare her to enjoy the society of heaven. Her feelings, although not passionate and enthusiastic, were deep and genuine. In this state of mind she remained through the summer; examining her exercises with the severest scrutiny, and receiving nothing as testimony of her adoption until brought to the test of the Bible. In the following September she obeyed the mandate of her Savior, and was received in fellowship with the First Baptist Church of Christ in Eaton.

"From this period the ardent desires she felt for her youthful companions were evinced by her affectionate entreaties, and heartfelt appeals, and her fervent petitions at the mercy seat. But her desires were not limited to those in her own social circle. Possessed of that spirit of unbounded benevolence which induced her blessed Mas-

ter to leave heaven for earth's redemption, she felt and prayed for a ruined *world*. The consideration that millions of her kindred fellows were sinking to unending despair without a knowledge of that Savior who had given to her such high hopes of glory, excited desires to leave the home of her childhood, that she might point the untaught heathen to Jesus Christ, and with them enjoy the unmingled felicities of a future world.

"But in the midst of these fond expectations, and in the vigor of youth, He who has the hearts and lives of all in his hand saw fit to liberate her sainted spirit from earthly toils to rest with Christ in glory. May her mantle fall upon others who shall catch her spirit and accomplish her designs of benevolence and works of love.

"The severity of her sickness allowed her the enjoyment of reason only at inter-

vals. But during these intervals she expressed a resignation to death, and much gratitude to God that he had called her attention to the concerns of eternity, and mercifully forgiven her sins before disease had wasted her strength and deranged the powers of her mind. With these views in relation to the most appropriate time to make preparation for a dying hour, she selected for the subject of discourse on the day of her funeral the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes: 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not.'" — *N. Y. Baptist Register*, Vol. 9, No. 8.

It must not be supposed that Harriet's interest in those who "have not so much as heard if there be a God," recorded above, grew out of too low an estimate of home duties, or a vague desire to do some far-away thing. She had been educated to a

full knowledge of the responsibilities of the church of the present age in this respect, and she had heard burning words from the lips of her sainted sister, and listened to fervent prayers; while such missionary literature as existed at that time had been made as familiar to her as the geography and history of her own country, or as the truths of the Bible. Had her life been spared, she would have been a minister of good in whatever situation she was placed. But she was especially interested in the heathen, because *she knew their needs.* She had never, even in the days of her thoughtlessness, been capable of doing things by halves; and now, schooled by the new principle implanted in her nature, she grasped at once at the highest good. But she had never been so gentle and considerate, so diligent in the performance of the minutest family duty, so studious of

every body's comfort, so kind a sister, or so watchful, attentive, and sweetly dutiful a daughter, as now. That her heart was seeking employments elsewhere, only seemed to quicken its susceptibilities to those which gathered around her feet.

I well recollect when Harriet one day took me privately to her room, and confided to me the decision which she had a short time previously made known to our parents. I had read most reverentially of the doings of missionaries, and had thought of them as belonging to a different order of beings from the men and women of common life, people devoid of human infirmities, and almost of human sympathies;* and although I would have resented indignantly the smallest word derogatory to my sister, I should not certainly have selected her as,

* I had lowered, instead of elevating them.

to my conception, the ripest subject for the martyr's conflict or his crown. Therefore, with a look of undisguised dismay, I exclaimed, "Why, Harriet! Do you think you are good enough to be a missionary?"

"No," she answered, softly, her lids drooping, and tears glittering on their long lashes. "No, I am not good enough for any holy work; but you know, darling, that the Savior will let very wicked people tell their fellow-sinners about Him sometimes. Perhaps I can do a little good."

"I know you will do a great deal of good but ——"

"Just think of it!" she exclaimed, with a sudden burst of enthusiasm; "if I *should* be permitted to save a soul from death!"

Her hopeful fervor was irresistibly contagious. "If she should!" thought I; "and she my sister!" And from that moment

to the end of her life I regarded her with a singular mixture of admiration and awe.

Among the first improvements which Harriet attempted after the death of our lamented elder sister was a more systematic arrangement of her time with regard to her studies and other employments. Possessing a mind naturally discriminating and comprehensive, her improvement even without an instructor was rapid. After her conversion, she so far overcame her repugnance to the pen as to keep a private journal, and also to surprise the family by several effusions, whose fresh, unstudied gracefulness was regarded as an earnest of future excellence. All these, with such other papers as she had in her possessions in compliance with her death-bed injunction, were destroyed unopened.

The autumn of 1831 was extremely rig-

orous; and the month of December brought, in place of its usual melancholy rains, the heavy snows and driving sleet of winter. Harriet, from some unpremeditated exposure, took a sudden cold; and on the 8th of December her bright young head was laid away to rest upon its earthen pillow. A wild storm had been raging for many days; and though our parents felt a strong desire to lay the sisters side by side, the roads to Eaton were impassable; and so Harriet — our sunny one, our delicate summer blossom — was buried alone at Morrisville, the cold snows glittering above her, and the stern December winds wailing her requiem. O, how desolate is the hearthstone when we have just laid a loved one from the circle gathering round it in a wintry grave! But *her* home can nevermore be desolate. The storms of a thousand

winters can never reach that happy land, where, safe in the Savior's care, hemmed in by shining throngs of angels, she rests amid the glories of paradise.

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